



## DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN TOGO

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### ABSTRACT

*Following the presidential election held in Togo on April 24, 2005, after the death in office of long-time president Gnassingbé Eyadéma, unprecedented levels of violence erupted across the country adding to the history of troubled elections in Africa. This paper investigates the Togolese presidential election of 2005, which is to date the smallest election held in Africa and one seriously marred by violence. The study was conducted following the methodology as under: Collecting, sorting and analyzing secondary information relating political history of the country. We find that 5% of Togolese were affected by the violence regardless of their ethnicity and wealth. The chances of being a victim of violence were higher in where politically-connected gangs operated. Violence, which was mainly triggered by the perception that the election had been rigged, reduced trust and social capital among communities making violence more likely to reoccur. The main finding is that treating electoral violence as a criminal matter or a cyclical phenomenon is not likely to end future elections from being violent. The more robust approach of adopting postelection political agreements in Togo showed early promise, but the protests following the recently held elections in Togo show a continuing institutional weakness for managing electoral conflict.*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The slow growth of Togo over the period since Independence is now understood as being partly attributable to poor governance. Until the 1990s the predominant African political system was autocracy. As (Besley and Masayuki, 2007) show, while in some contexts autocracy has produced good economic performance, in Africa it has consistently been dysfunctional. During the 1990s many African autocracies were replaced by democracy. Given the dismal record of autocracy, there was a reasonable expectation that democracy would achieve both accountability and legitimacy, and thereby both improve economic performance and reduce proneness to political

violence. However, the record of elections in Togo and other recent low-income democracies is not encouraging. Kudamatsu (2006) measures government performance by infant mortality and shows that, in Africa, elections produce no improvement except in the rare instances in which the incumbent is defeated. Collier and Dominic (2008) find that below per capita income of \$2,750 democracy significantly increases proneness to civil war and various other manifestations of violence.

A likely reason for the failure of most elections to discipline governments into improved performance is that the participants rely upon illegitimate strategies to victory. For example, the Kenyan elections of December 2007 aroused widespread international accusations that the parties had resorted to miscounting of votes, bribery, and intimidation. Although these strategies may have profound consequences for the failure of democracy to improve government performance, they are difficult to investigate beyond the level of the anecdotal. To date the clearest evidence concerns vote miscounting, since sufficiently large miscounting will show up as a discrepancy between opinion polls and outcomes. Evidence on vote buying has recently been analyzed through randomized experiments by Vicente (2007). While we provide evidence on both these strategies, the contribution of this paper is to apply the same approach to the use of violence to intimidate voters. The context for our analysis is the Togolese Presidential election of 2005.

These elections were undoubtedly violent: over 500 people were killed in the course of it. However, the important issue is whether this was simply random inter-communal violence, or whether it was a systematic electoral strategy with systematic consequences for votes. The expression of electoral conflict and violence can occur at five intervals in an election chronology.

- Identity conflict can occur during the registration process when refugees or other conflict-forced migrants cannot establish or re-establish their officially recognized identities. The result is that these populations can remain disenfranchised and outside of the political process and potentially provoking conflict within the process.

- Campaign conflict can occur as rivals seek to disrupt the opponents' campaigns, intimidate voters and candidates, and use threats and violence to influence participation in the voting. As a survey of electoral events from 2005 will suggest, conflict among political rivals appears to have been the most common form of electoral conflict.

- Balloting conflict can occur on Election Day when political rivalries are played out at the polling station. Steps can be taken to provide alternative means of balloting if particular groups or communities are exposed to violence or intimidation.

- Results conflict can occur in disputes over election results and the inability of judicial mechanisms to resolve these disputes in a timely, fair, and transparent manner. The manner in which results are reported can also be a conflict issue.

- Representation conflict can occur when elections are organized as “zero sum” events where “losers” are left out of participation in governance. As Ben Reilly and Andrew Reynolds state in their book *Electoral Systems and Conflict in Divided Societies: The optima choice fo peacefully managing conflict depends on several identifiable factors specie to the country, including the way and degree to which ethnicity is politicized, the intensity of the conflict, and the demographic and*

geographic distribution of ethnic groups. In addition, the electoral system that is most appropriate for initially ending internal conflict may not be the best one of longer-term conflict management.

The purpose of this article is to assess the incidence, impacts and the dynamics of the 2005 electoral violence. The article seeks to provide light to understanding of who was affected by violence, what sort of issues triggered the violence and what were the consequences left by the electoral violence at community level. The majority of studies of conflict have tended to focus on cross-country comparisons, or in the case of country studies, to gather scant evidence, often anecdotal, which limits the understanding of what are the risk factors for violence. This paper aims to contribute to the emerging field of micro-quantitative studies on conflict (Collier and Vicente, 2008; Barron *et al.*, 2009; Bellows and Miguel, 2009) by assessing the individual and local factors that increased the risk of being a victim of electoral violence. The quantitative and qualitative data used allow us to draw a national representative perspective, with enough data at small area-level, to be able to assess how violence emerged and affected people at community level. Although the paper focuses on the experience of Togo, its findings have broader relevance as they reveal what sort of institutional failures led to violence and reflect policies that could be taken to reduce the recurrence of civil conflict.

According to the self-reported incidence of violence in our surveys, violence affected about 5% of Togolese in terms of personal injury, being displaced from home, and destruction of property, loss of jobs or earnings or having a friend or relatives that died in the elections. The likelihood of being a victim of violence was not affected by the respondent's ethnicity or wealth but by where respondents lived. Respondents living in urban areas and in areas which had suffered land disputes before the election had a higher likelihood of being victims of violence. Violence was directly instigated by political actors and by politically connected gangs even before the elections. Nonetheless, the majority of respondents believe that violence was triggered mainly by the perception that the election had been rigged.

The ordeal of the disputed election reduced trust across ethnic groups, a key element of social capital among communities. International experience has shown that in situations where (ethnic) groups distrust each other and are afraid of being victimized, this fear might drive them to resort to violence first in a preemptive move to minimize damage (Bardhan, 1997). Taking into account that having experienced conflict in the recent past is a good predictor for future conflict (Collier *et al.*, 2008), Togo is at risk of experiencing violence in the future general elections if institutions are not strengthened to cope with the underlying grievances, the need for justice and the mistrust among ethnic groups.

In Section 2 we give the definition of election violence. Section 3 we present the methodology of the study. Sections 4 describe the Togolese presidential election of 2005 and the official results of the election. Section 5 discusses about the effect of the Media in Election Violence. In section 6 we present the analysis on conflicts and political violence in Togo. And in the last two sections, we present the summary of finding and Policy Recommendations.

## 2. DEFINING ELECTION VIOLENCE

While there may be many contending definitions of election violence, for our purposes, election violence is defined as acts that are used to harm, intimidate, exploit, disrupt, determine,

hasten, delay, or reverse electoral processes or outcomes, and acts that occur between the registration of a voter and the inauguration of a political regime.

There are several perspectives that can be taken on election violence, offering a wide range for analysis. One can look at:

- the tactics of violence (e.g., beatings, kidnappings, killings);
- the perpetrators of violence (e.g., party officials, governments);
- the participants in violence (e.g., paid thugs, mobs, police, military, campaign workers, party loyalists);
- the venues of violence (e.g., polling places, street rallies, government offices);
- the timing of violence (e.g., before, during, or after the voting period); and, of course,
- the victims of violence (e.g., election officials, voters, candidates).

In developing a typology of election violence, the broadest question to be considered is whether election violence is proactive or reactive. Proactive violence involves violence or the threat of violence to affect election outcomes and voting decisions. Included in proactive violence are:

(1) Turnout suppression—The goal here is to suppress votes. Individual voters' intentions may be difficult to discern; however, when there are cleavages along geographic, ethnic, linguistic, or religious boundaries, or a clear demographic basis of support, turnout suppression is an effective tactic because targets for violence or intimidation can be easily identified.

(2) Boycott enforcement—the goal here is to lower turnout and thereby delegitimize the election. Enforcement targets can be one's own ethnic, tribal, religious, linguistic, or geographic group.

Reactive violence occurs post-election and is often used to protest unfavorable election outcomes. Reactive violence can take several forms:

- Justice seeking: to protest or redress outcomes from rigged or fraudulent elections.
- Retaliatory: to fulfill pre-election threats when the outcome is unsatisfactory.
- Outcome grieving: to show displeasure with the outcome of a legitimate election in which there is no clear evidence of rigging or fraud. Often this violence is cloaked as redressing fraudulent elections.

The political culture of the system is likely to be a key variable in determining whether there will be election violence. In most political systems, strong electioneering laws are designed to create a 'safe space' to limit the possibility of physical intimidation in proximity to the polls.

However, enforcement of such laws varies significantly.

In the United States, where there is a strong cultural norm of free elections, there have been episodes of political violence most closely associated with turnout suppression (e.g., threats of violence against African-Americans by organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan). Other nonviolent methods of protesting elections or suppression are more common. These include Jim Crow laws to prevent registration of African-American voters, legislation to require specific forms of identification prior to voting, or long lines and insufficient staff to handle election-day volume.

Allegations of fraud (dead voter's casting votes, ballots lost or destroyed) are common in closely contested elections, such as the 2000 United States Presidential election or the 2008 United States Senate contest in Minnesota.

But even in these extreme cases in which the mechanics of the election were contested (poorly constructed ballots, faulty voting machines, uneven and non-uniform application of election rules),

the ultimate outcomes were accepted, albeit grudgingly, and violence was absent. Incidents of post-election violence in the United States are rare or, at the very least, not well documented. Such is not the case in other systems.

### **3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted following the methodology as under:

- Collecting, sorting and analyzing secondary information relating political history of the country;
- Collecting, analyzing, reviewing and assessing secondary information relating to recent political history and economic development;
- Interviewing and questioning some political leaders in order to undertake their perceptions in that respect;
- Interviewing and questioning of the business and chamber leaders for primary data regarding the role of business community ensuring political stability.

### **4. TOGOLESE ELECTORAL VIOLENCE OF 2005**

#### **4.1. Transition to democracy and Fight for democracy in Togo**

In the early 1990s, the international community began putting pressure on Eyadéma to democratize, a notion he resisted with a few waves of his trademark iron fist. Pro-democracy activists were met with armed troops, killing scores of protesters in several clashes. The people of France and Togo were furious, and under their backlash Eyadéma gave in. He was summarily stripped of all powers and made president in name only. An interim prime minister was elected to take over command, but not four months later his residence was shelled with heavy artillery by Eyadéma's army. Heavy fighting continued into 1993.

Terrorstrikes against the independent press and political assassination attempts became commonplace, while the promised 'transition' to democracy came to a standstill. The opposition continued to call general strikes, leading to further violence by the army and the exodus of hundreds of thousands of southerners to Ghana and Benin. Using intimidation tactics and clever political machinations that disqualified one opposition party and caused another to refuse to participate, Eyadéma won the 1993 presidential elections with more than 96% of the vote. In the years following, opposition parties have lost most of their steam and Eyadéma's control has become almost as firm as before the crisis began.

In August 1996, Prime Minister Edem Kodjo resigned, and the planning minister, Kwassi Klutse, was appointed prime minister. Eyadéma won another five-year term in June 1998 with 52% of the vote, nearly being defeated by Gilchrist Olympio, son of Sylvanus Olympio. Later investigations revealed widespread human rights abuses.

In 2002, in what critics called a 'constitutional coup', the national assembly voted unanimously to change the constitution and allow Eyadéma to 'sacrifice himself again' and run for a third term during the 2003 presidential elections. The constitutional change eliminated presidential term limits. Meanwhile, Gilchrist Olympio's attempts to beat the man who overthrew his father were scuppered yet again when he was banned from running on a tax-law technicality.

Despite the allegations of electoral fraud denounced by opposition, Eyadéma won 57% of the votes in the 2003 elections, which international observers from the African Union described as generally free and transparent. For many Togolese, there was little optimism for the future and a prevailing sense of déjà vu as Eyadéma extended his record as Africa's longest-serving ruler.

#### **4.2. Togolese Presidential Election of 2005**

A presidential election was held in Togo on April 24, 2005, following the death in office of long-time president Gnassingbé Eyadéma. The main candidates were Eyadéma's son, Faure Gnassingbé, and opposition leader Emmanuel Bob-Akitani. The election and the period preceding it were marked by violence, and many people were reported killed in various incidents. According to official results, Gnassingbé won the election, taking slightly more than 60% of the vote. Violence flared in the capital Lomé after the results were announced, and thousands have fled into neighboring countries.

#### **4.3. Background**

The death of Eyadéma on February 5, 2005, was followed by the naming of his son, Faure, as president. This move was taken first by the military, ostensibly to ensure stability, and subsequently legalized—at least ostensibly—by Gnassingbé's election as parliament speaker by the parliament, which is controlled by the ruling party, the Rally for the Togolese People (RPT). The parliament subsequently changed the constitution so that elections would not need to be held within 60 days, thus allowing the son to serve out the remainder of his father's term, which would have expired in 2008. These events were branded an unconstitutional coup by many, who thought that the parliament speaker at the time of Eyadéma's death, Fambaré Ouattara Natchaba, should have taken power according to the constitution. Under heavy pressure from others in the region, Gnassingbé stepped down on February 25 and was replaced by Bonfoh Abbass, but he ran for president with the backing of the ruling party in an election on April 24, 2005.

#### **4.4. Campaign**

Faure had been formally chosen as the party's candidate immediately prior to his resignation on February 25, 2005. The main opposition leader, Gilchrist Olympio, was barred from standing due to a provision that a presidential candidate must have lived in the country for 12 months prior to the election; Olympio had been in exile, and his party, the Union of Forces for Change (UFC), nominated Emmanuel Bob-Akitani, the party's vice-president, as its candidate instead, representing a six-party opposition coalition. Bob-Akitani, who was chosen as the joint candidate of the six parties on March 14, 2005, previously and unsuccessfully ran against Gnassingbé's father in 2003. Olympio returned to the country from exile on March 19 and endorsed Bob-Akitani's candidacy. Harry Olympio of the Rally for the Support of Democracy and Development (RSDD) said in mid-March that he would be a candidate; he pointed to Bob-Akitani's advanced age in saying that Togo needed youthful leadership. Gnassingbé, at age 38, was even younger than Harry Olympio, however, and he also tried to use this to his advantage by stressing the need for youthful leadership.

Candidates had until March 26 to register, and campaigning took place from April 8 to April 22, 2005. The opposition demanded the postponement of the election, and it continued to do so

after the electoral commission said on March 23 that the election would go ahead as scheduled. Demonstrations both for and against the April 24 date were held on March 26, 2005. Voter registration began on March 28, 2005. Complaining of irregularities in the registration process, minor candidates Harry Olympio and Nicolas Lawson also called for the election to be delayed by one month on March 29, 2005. Harry Olympio alleged that some opposition supporters were not being allowed to register; he also alleged that voter cards issued for deceased individuals were being distributed. Lawson alleged that people were being intimidated by the army, predicted "massive electoral fraud", and said that failure to postpone the election would result in a call for revolution.

On April 16, seven people, six from the ruling party and one from the opposition, were reportedly killed in clashes between supporters of the two sides. Each side accused the other of provoking the violence.

A few days before the election, interior minister Francois Boko said it would be "suicidal" to hold the election as planned and called for it to be postponed. He also called for a transitional government to be set up that would last for one or two years with an opposition prime minister. This call was quickly rejected by interim president BonfohAbbass, who also said that Boko would be replaced as interior minister. Bob-Akitani, who also wanted the elections postponed, called Boko's action "courageous".

Nicolas Lawson of the Party for Renewal and Redemption (PRR) had planned to contest the election but withdrew shortly after Boko's statement. Another candidate, Kofi Yamgnane, withdrew from the race in favor of Bob-Akitani a month earlier, on March 23, 2005.

#### **4.5. Ballot**

As the voting ended on April 24, three people were reported to have been killed. Each side has accused the other of disruption and stuffing ballot boxes. On April 25, 2005, Gnassingbé and Gilchrist Olympio reportedly reached a deal providing for the establishment of a government of national unity, regardless of who won the election, but this was later denied by the opposition. On April 26, 2005, provisional results were announced: Gnassingbé won with 60.22% of the vote, with Bob-Akitani coming in second with 38.19%. Harry Olympio received only 0.55% of the vote, while Lawson took 1.04% despite having withdrawn from the race. 63.6% of registered voters participated in the election. The constitutional court confirmed Gnassingbé's win on 3 May, 2005, when official results were released (see Table 1 and Table 2).

#### **4.6. Election Aftermath**

On April 27, 2005, 11 people were reported dead and 95 injured in clashes as supporters of the opposition battled the police in Lomé. Bob-Akitani subsequently declared himself president, claiming to have actually taken 70% of the vote. By April 29, 2005, approximately 100 people were reported by opposition media to have been killed, many in the town of Aneho, near the border with Benin. The Togolese League of Human Rights said later in May that 790 people had been killed and 4,345 had been hurt in the violence, covering the period from March 28 to May 5, 2005. This is considerably higher than previous estimates of a death toll of about 100. An official

commission of inquiry into the violence has been ordered by the government. About 24,000 people are said to have fled into neighboring Ghana and Benin.

## **5. THE EFFECT OF THE MEDIA IN ELECTION VIOLENCE**

The structure of media organizations and the nature of elections make it very difficult to fully ascertain the role of media in election violence, particularly if the violence is in the form of subtle intimidation or threats.

These threats can be made through personal contact, rendering them invisible to the media. In addition, unlike other events such as mass political rallies or demonstrations, elections take place at thousands of venues in a given country. Yet, major media outlets are typically found only in national capitals or large cities.

Essentially, media outlets seem to have three frames for presentation of elections: violence or the images of voters going to the polls, ballots being dropped into ballot boxes, and officials and clerks counting returns.

While an election may be largely violence-free in rural and less accessible areas, violence in urban areas comes to define the election—both for the world at large and for the voters who see their compatriots threatened or beaten. While new technologies, such as cell phones and other highly mobile personal video devices, enable some bypassing of the mainstream media, there is often skepticism of the breadth of violence and issues of authenticity.

The media play two crucial roles with respect to election violence:

First, they provide evidence or at least the external implication that an election is illegitimate or being contested domestically, regardless of the fairness of the election or its certification by independent election commissions and election monitoring organizations. Interpretative frames may imply that the election has not been free and fair and has been rigged through voter intimidation or vote-counting fraud.

Second, by showing compatriots being hurt or killed, the media serve to inform the domestic audience of the risks and dangers of participating in or protesting the election. While graphic images of violence may incite further protests, such protests more often dissipate in response to the risks, especially when the media also cover suppression of protests (like those in Tiananmen Square or more recently in Iran) and officials use the media to threaten violence against protesters.

## **6. ANALYSIS ON CONFLICTS AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN TOGO**

The politically motivated violence that occurred in the country in 2005 is a very disturbing phenomenon. The scourge dampens what was expected to be a steady trend towards economic recovery and progress anchored by the inclusive Government. Political violence does not serve any purpose other than to reverse the gains that the country has made in the last two years.

For once the people of Togo should learn to be responsible and forward looking. We are all aware of the devastating effects of political violence on economic development, and people's social lives through our experiences of 2005. Have we surely forgotten already about the abominable and catastrophic events of 2005 when schools closed indefinitely, the public health system collapsed within a short space of time, and almost all Government services coming to a standstill?



Economic development is about creating and distributing wealth, raising people's living standards, and improving social indicators, not sponsoring violence. Political violence is barbaric as it destroys human lives, properties and social infrastructure. It represents development in regression, or rested development. It even becomes more retrogressive or anti-social when it becomes organised. Organised political violence significantly lowers economic growth and merely saves the narrow interests of its sponsors. The unbridled attack on the general public and their properties including their livelihoods is an evil we should all condemn. Political violence means persistent poverty.

Table 3: shows that the distribution of the victim's electoral violence by region in %. According to the table 3 the maritime region is the region with the highest concentration of victims of electoral violence (43% of the total victim).

Electoral conflicts and political violence have featured in Togo's democratization, signaling weaknesses in the governance of elections, the rules of orderly political competition, and the lack of impartial judiciaries to interpret and adjudicate electoral disputes. The challenges of electoral conflicts and political violence reflect the problems of transitions to democracy associated with managing elections and building institutions of competition that are widely accepted by winners and losers. In other instances, electoral conflicts and political violence arise, in part, from reactions of groups that have been deliberately disadvantaged and disempowered by their opponents. Claims about the deliberate subversion of the ends of electoral and democratic processes are always invoked by losers who then seek redress through violence. Although certain levels of violence frequently occur at different stages of the electoral process in Togo, the upsurge of electoral contestations that lead to large-scale violence is an emerging issue of policy concern. Elections that end in widespread conflict and violence, resulting in the loss of lives and the destruction of property raise questions about election management and administration, but also about the long-term impact on the consolidation of political competition.

The patterns of electoral violence that characterized the electioneering process often persisted into the post electoral phase, particularly where losing parties challenged the legitimacy of winners. After Togolese presidential election of 2005, losing parties challenged the results through mass demonstrations, destruction of property, threats and intimidation of opponents, and work stoppages. These events, in turn, elicited violent responses by regimes that sought to restore order, peace, and security. In some cases, the spiral of violence throughout the electoral cycle forced opposition groups to boycott the elections, especially in circumstances where organized violence by ruling parties succeeded in curtailing the organizational abilities of weak and fledgling parties.

Electoral violence everywhere imperils democracy by distorting normal mechanisms of political competition but, more fundamentally, by increasing mass apathy toward and alienation from politics. In those African countries like Togo that have made significant progress in building pluralism, the growing incidence of electoral violence has dampened the impetus for democratic consolidation.

## 7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Electoral violence, especially the incidents that occur with some regularity, seems indicative of

more widespread systematic grievances. Treating electoral violence as a criminal matter or a cyclical phenomenon is not likely to end future elections from being violent. The more robust approach of adopting postelection political agreements in Togo showed early promise, but the protests following the recently held elections in Togo show a continuing institutional weakness for managing electoral conflict.

Moreover, further research is needed to improve measurement of electoral violence and, correspondingly, the factors that trigger it; the effects of electoral violence on democratization; and effective methods for managing the threat or eruption of electoral violence

## 8. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

At the national level countries should mainstream conflict-prevention strategies in their electoral cycles and introduce conflict-prevention activities into the entire electoral cycle. This would contribute to promoting the function of elections as an alternative to violence.

There is a need to establish facilitation mechanisms at national level to promote dialogue between the relevant national institutions such as the judiciary, the election management bodies, political parties and civil society, to reach consensus on methods of dealing with election-related conflicts.

Regional and continental organizations might explore the idea of establishing an apex body to help manage elections. Such a body could help to enhance the capacity of national election management bodies to organize elections more professionally as well as to ensure the independence of electoral bodies and ward off undue influence from undemocratic governments or external players.

Two processes are suggested in order to ensure that elections add value to democracy: the implementation by individual countries of existing continental, regional and international principles of election management and the establishment of common standards for election observation.

There is a need to enhance the capacity of the election management bodies to enable them to carry out their mandates more effectively. This process should include technical assistance, training of staff in electoral management, and support for information technology capacities.

The marginal participation of civil society in governance spheres remains a key impediment to countries broadening peace and security beyond the dominant and narrow state-centric approach.

More research is needed to illuminate the relationship between the media and internal conflict. For conflict management objectives, it is particularly important to increase knowledge of a national or local media's role in conflict management during periods of democratic transition.

For media to have a sustainable conflict management role, the encouragement of national media development could ensure that media play an independent role in promoting democratic principles, supplying credible information, and monitoring accountable and transparent governance. An important way of doing this is by promoting a representative, editorially and economically independent media as necessary and key instrument of democracy. Independence can ensure the media's capability to resist manipulation by selfishly motivated actors and credibly act as a watchdog for transparent governance and to resist other inflammatory escalation pressures. Another important aspect for media development is to concentrate on media (as for example radio) that has the capacity to reach the largest and widest spectrum of societal groups. Generally

promoting literacy can also be vital in order to provide populations with tools to assess the credibility of information and to look for alternative sources.

Giving priority to credible and legitimate media is crucial to a constructive, long-term and sustainable conflict management role of the media. Both in the promotion and development of national or local media as for external media interventions. Therefore, it is imperative that the basic journalistic ethics and professional standards are adhered to. The international community could play a significant part in promoting credibility. For example, by encouraging adherence to professional journalistic standards and by promoting the safety and freedom of independent journalists, particularly local journalists.

Promotion of media credibility based on "truthfulness" rather than objectivity is more realistic and sustainable. Media are already part of social political context and, therefore, never completely neutral, but this does not mean that media cannot behave impartially and according to certain guiding principles. Experience and research has shown that credibility and truthfulness are more important than neutrality or objectivity.

In extremely volatile situations, usually directly prior to, or after, higher levels of violence, media interventions focused particularly on reducing perceptions of threat and zero-sum attitudes may be necessary. Encouraging the respect and understanding of the media as a crucial element and actor in a political system not based on zero-sum perceptions of power, is particularly important in democratising states. However, these initiatives should not be considered as alternatives to replace long-term media development. When outlining policy and implementing such short-term initiatives, long-term objectives should also be kept in mind.

Before external involvement it is vital that thorough assessments and analyses of the local situation are made. Including assessments of information needs, the level and characteristics of media freedom, sustainability and legislation, and the role and security situation of journalists. Equally important is to have an idea of audience composition, with particular emphasis on widespread and common attitudes and cultural symbols, related to political structures and actors.

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**Table-1.** Official election results by candidate

Candidates -	Nominating parties	%
Faure Gnassingbé	Rally for the Togolese People	60.15
Emmanuel Bob-Akitani	Union of Forces for Change	38.25
Nicolas Lawson	Party for Renewal and Redemption	1.04
Harry Olympio	Rally for the Support of Democracy and Development	0.55

**Source:** Commission national electoral 2005

**Table-2.** Official election results statistics

Total (turnout 63.6 %)	2,200,274
Registered voters	3,599,306
Total votes	2,288,279
Invalid or blank votes	88,005

**Source:** Commission national electoral 2005.

**Table-3.** Distribution of victim's electoral violence by province in%

Region	Maritime	Plateau	Central	Kara	Savane
Number of victim	43%	20%	18%	12%	7%

**Source:** Commission Koffigoh.

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